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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 AMMAN 004855

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 06/15/2014

TAGS: PHUM ELAB PREF KWMN IZ JO KTIP

SUBJECT: JORDAN TAKES ACTION TO PREVENT TRAFFICKING OF PERSONS INTO IRAQ

REF: AMMAN 04132

Classified By: Charge d'Affaires David Hale for Reasons 1.5 (b), (d)

SUMMARY

1. (C) King Abdullah and senior GOJ officials have strongly condemned the possible trafficking of third country nationals (TCNs) into Iraq from Jordan. The Minister of Interior promised the Ambassador that he would take firm action against unscrupulous labor recruiting agents and others complicit in this prohibited practice. The GOJ has reached an agreement with the Embassy of India in Amman requiring Indian nationals to obtain a letter of authorization from the Embassy before exiting Jordan on their way to Iraq. End Summary.

RESOLVE AT THE HIGHEST LEVEL

2. (C) During a lunch June 8 hosted by King Abdullah and which included senior GOJ officials, the Ambassador raised the issue of the possible trafficking of TCNs into Iraq from Jordan (see reftel). The King replied that he was already aware of the potential problem, having been briefed on cases of TCNs duped into going to Iraq after coming to Jordan, and firmly stated that this would not be tolerated. Foreign Minister Muasher and other officials present likewise condemned the trafficking of persons into Iraq and promised to help investigate and end this prohibited practice.

INTERIOR MINISTER PLEDGES ACTION

3. (C) Following lunch with the King, the Ambassador met separately with Minister of Interior Samir Habashneh to discuss the trafficking issue. The Ambassador told Habashneh about recent instances of TCNs possibly trafficked into Iraq and gave him the names and phone numbers of two labor recruiting agents implicated in one of these cases. Habashneh promised to immediately investigate the agents and to take firm action against anyone involved in facilitating the trafficking of persons into Iraq from Jordan.

GOJ, INDIAN EMBASSY COOPERATE TO PREVENT TRAFFICKING

4. (C) The Humanitarian Assistance Coordination Center for Iraq (HACC) recently reported that the GOJ was working on agreements with select third country embassies in Amman to help prevent trafficking into Iraq. PolOff confirmed that such an agreement has been reached between the Ministry of Interior and the Embassy of India. Specifically, the Indian Consul told PolOff June 14 that Indian nationals wishing to enter Iraq from Jordan to obtain work must personally appear at the embassy and attest that they are traveling to Iraq of their own free will to accept a bona fide job offer that includes insurance. The Indian Embassy will then, and only then, issue a formal letter that the Indian nationals must present to Jordanian border authorities before being permitted to leave the country for Iraq. (NOTE: Representatives of the Embassies of Sri Lanka and the Philippines informed PolOff they were aware of possible instances of trafficking of their nationals into Iraq and were in contact with the GOJ on this subject, but had not yet negotiated any agreement. There is no Bangladeshi diplomatic mission present in Amman.)

COMMENT

5. (C) The King's awareness and unequivocal repudiation of the trafficking of persons should further encourage the GOJ to address this issue. The agreement reached between the Ministry of Interior and the Embassy of India demonstrates that high-level GOJ resolve is already being translated into real action.

6. (U) Baghdad minimize considered.

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HALE